targeted technologies which they felt might become unviable due to changed market conditions. It may be noted that projects with a significant innovation/ technology development element are inherently unpredictable with regard to their outcome.

Geographical changes due to Tsunami

3199. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Tsunami pushed India 12 cms closer to Indonesia according to the Scientists of National Geographical Research Institute; and

(b) if so, what impact it would have when there is another Tsunami in the region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes Sir. The data collected and analyzed from two permanent Global Positioning System (GPS) stations, one located at Sumatra namely at Medan, and the other located at Bangalore indicates decrease in distance of 12 cms.

(b) This change will have no impact in case another Tsunami occurs in the region.

Funds for women scientists

†3200. SHRIMATI KUMKUM RAI: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that women scientists in the country do not get timely funds to carry out the research work;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of women scientists who have been provided with funds to carry out research in the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) 244 women scientists have been provided with funds to carry out research under the Schemes "Women Scientists Scheme—A

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(Research in Basic and Applied Sciences)" and "Women Scientists Scheme-B (Research in Societal Programmes)" since its inception in the year 2003.

National Biotechnology Development strategy

3201. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had brought out a draft National Biotechnology Development Strategy;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government are considering to change the rules and set up a single High Powered Regulatory Authority to provide for a faster and more efficient clearance for all biotechnology products; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, the Department of Biotechnology has prepared a draft National Biotechnology Development Strategy. The Draft has been released and placed on the web site of the Department of biotechnology for comments. The draft strategy addresses cross cutting issues related to Biotechnology in the areas of human resource development, infrastructure development, promotion of innovation and industry, biotechnology parks, regulatory mechanisms and public communication and participation. In addition sectoral road maps have also been included in the areas of agriculture and food biotechnology, medical biotechnology, bioresources, environment, industry, bio-engineering and nano-biotechnology and bioinformatics. Specific strategic actions in each area have been proposed.

(c) and (d) In the draft National Biotechnology Development Strategy it is proposed to establish a single National Biotechnology Regulatory Authority with separate divisions for agriculture products/transgenic crops, pharmaceuticals/drugs and industrial product; and transgenic food/feed and transgenic animal/aquaculture. It is suggested that the authority be governed by an independent administrative structure with a common chairman. The inter-ministerial group would evolve suitable proposals for consideration of the government.